



Rebuild Florida General Planning Support (GPS) Frequently Asked Questions

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Rebuild Florida General Planning Support Program (GPS) Frequently Asked Questions

I. Application

Q: When does this application period start and close?

A: The GPS application opened on Friday May 15 and closes on Friday July 31 at 5 P.M. (EST).

Q: How many projects should be included in one application?

A: Applicants may only propose one project per application.

Q: How many applications can one entity submit?

A: Entities, such as a county or municipality, may submit as many applications as they wish. If entities are submitting more than one application, make sure to name all attached files like so, EntityNamePD_GPS1, EntityNamePD_GPS2, EntityNamePD_GPS3 etc.

Q: What are the maximum and minimum allocation an entity can request?

A: An **entity** may request a maximum of \$10,000,000 per project application. To be eligible, each application must request a minimum of \$20,000. Entities may be approved for several applications, but will not be approved for more than \$10,000,000 in projects.

Q: How do I make a zip file?

A: Create a folder in your documents that contains the Word document and .jpeg files. Name the file your EntityNameCV_GPS. Next, right click the folder. Select “Send to”, then select “Compressed zipped folder”. Additional instructions for making a zip file can be found [here](#).

Q: Do I have to make a zip file for the Community Value question?

A: A zip file for this section is preferred. However, you can attach photos to a Word document or PowerPoint Presentation. Only a single document will be accepted in any of the attachment questions. This means that you cannot upload both a Word document and a PowerPoint presentation. Therefore, if you upload a Word document or PowerPoint

instead of a zip file, you must make sure both the community value questions and images are included in the single document.

Q: The application only allows me to input three co-applicants. What if I have more than three?

A: List the three co-applicants who contribute the most for your project. Any additional co-applicants should be identified in your Capacity Plan.

Q: I accidentally uploaded the wrong document, what do I do?

A: Click on the name of the document that you uploaded. A dialog box will pop up to allow you to replace the current document with the correct one. Only a single document can be attached per section. Double check that the correct document is submitted under its designated section.

Q: I accidentally did not attach a document that is required, what do I do?

A: If you are still in the application, then navigate back to the question by using the green arrows located on the bottom pane of the application. Proceed to upload the document for this section. If you have already submitted the application to DEO, then you will need to email: CDBG-MIT@deo.myflorida.com with the missing documents attached. Explain the situation clearly in your email and describe which documents were missing. Make sure the documents you attach to the email are titled appropriately.

Q: The templates included in the application will not open for me, what do I do?

A: The Implementation Plan and Budget Templates are included at the very beginning of the application and are attached under their designated questions. Additionally, these templates can be found in the GPS Guidelines in Appendices D and E and on the Rebuild Florida website. If you are unable to open or find these templates, then contact the CDBG-MIT team at CDBG-MIT@deo.myflorida.com.

Q: I started the application but when I tried to access the link again, I could not get into my application.

A: In order to have unlimited access to your application you must complete the GPS program registration process. You can find the registration process on our website by clicking [here](#).

Q: I started the application but when I tried to access the link again, my answers were not saved.

A: First, make sure you have a strong Wi-Fi connection when accessing this application. Second, do not delete your “cookies” while completing this application. Additionally, in order to have unlimited access to your application, you must complete the registration process. You can find the link to the registration process on our website [here](#). Last, do not click the “back” button in the top left-hand corner of your browser. To navigate through the application, click the green arrow buttons on the bottom pane of the application.

Q: Who can sign the application for submission?

A: The application can be signed with a digital signature by the person who has signature authority for the applicant.

Q: Our application is being prepared by a consultant. Will we be reimbursed for those costs?

A: No. Page 11 of the GPS program [guidelines](#) reads, “Applications will be prepared at the applicant’s expense and costs are not reimbursable using CDBG-MIT grant funds.” DEO will not reimburse applicants for any fees for application consultation, preparation of the supporting documents, or any costs related to preparing, submitting, or monitoring the application.

Q: Do we need to submit the environmental review with the application?

A: No, however, the environmental review must be completed prior to committing or expending any funds. We are expecting that eligible activities and plans for the GPS will be exempt from environmental review under §58.34. The subrecipient must document in writing its determination that each activity or project is exempt and meets the conditions specified for such exemption under §58.34; this documentation must be submitted to DEO prior to committing or expending any funds.

Q: On the Implementation Plan, what date should I use as my start date and how accurate must my plan be?

A: The Implementation Plan will be used as a guide for DEO to determine key milestones and deliverables. Applicants should submit their projections to the best of their ability with the understanding that awardees will have the opportunity to revise their implementation plans once the funds are awarded.

II. Eligibility

Q: My city needs to develop a flood plan, is that eligible?

A: Yes, activities and plans eligible for this program can be found on page 9-10 in the GPS program [guidelines](#). In addition, eligible plans and activities are referenced in the Federal Register and identified at 24 CFR 570.205.

Q: I am not in a MID area. Can I apply?

A: If your plan or activity will benefit a MID area, you may apply. Please contact DEO to provide further information before applying.

Q: Can a non-profit organization apply for this program?

A: Yes, non-profits are eligible to apply for the GPS program.

Q: Can GPS funds be applied to purchasing mapping or data software?

A: Yes, the Federal Register Notice allows these funds to be used for, “upgrading mapping, data, and other capabilities to better understand evolving disaster risks.”

Q: Are design, engineering, or construction costs eligible for this program?

A: No, page 28 of the GPS program [guidelines](#) notes that construction, engineering, and other costs associated with a specific plan are ineligible. GPS funds may not be used to pay for plans associated with a specific project.

Q: Can we apply for the CDBG-MIT grant even though we have a current CDBG award?

A: Yes. Participation in any other CDBG program will not disqualify an entity from participation in any of the CDBG-MIT programs – Critical Facility Hardening, General Planning Support or General Infrastructure.

Q: Are non-profits required to have support from the local government?

A: No, non-profits do not need support from local government for the General Planning Support program. Non-profits are eligible to apply for the GPS program as the sole applicant.

Q: What is the threshold requirement for LMI?

A: The GPS Program does not have an LMI threshold. Applicants will not be asked to identify LMI information on the GPS application.

Q: Can CDBG-MIT funds be used to hire interns or staff?

A: Yes, the GPS Program funds may be used to hire interns or staff. However, you must document that the funding will be used for work solely on the CDBG-MIT project(s) applied for.

Q: Is a _____ plan/study/update eligible?

A: As stated in the program guidelines, eligible activities are limited to projects that improve state and local mitigation planning. Plans and activities may be eligible if they detail community hazards and present solutions for the treatment of those hazards. Final plans are required to include a mitigation needs assessment of disaster risks, including anticipated effects of future extreme weather events and other hazards. If your plan will contain these elements, it may be eligible. Page 9 of the GPS Program [guidelines](#) lists eligible activities.

Q: Can this grant be used to fund LMI housing construction, new generators, COVID or workforce training activities?

A: No. The General Planning Support Program is designed to fund plans and activities that will mitigate the natural disaster hazards identified in the CDBG-MIT Action Plan: flooding; coastal erosion; wildfires; severe storms; and tropical cyclones.

Q: Can I apply for a planning project currently in progress?

A: CDBG-MIT funds are funds of last resort. If your project is already fully funded, you may not supplant other funds with CDBG-MIT funds.

Q: What is the local match requirement?

A: There is no local match requirement for CDBG-MIT programs.

III. Requirements

Q: Is there a public notice requirement for this program?

A: Yes. Per recent guidance by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), due to the impacts of COVID-19, Units of General Local Governments (UGLG) must receive public input on their application by either posting information about their project to their public website for 14 days or by holding a virtual public meeting. The public notice requirement must be fulfilled prior to submitting the application. Details about the specific requirements are available on the DEO website [here](#).

Q: Will we be required to solicit a request for qualifications (RFQ) for an administration consultant to administer the grant for us?

A: No, you are not required to procure a consultant. However, if you choose to hire a consultant, you must follow all HUD and DEO procurement guidelines, which will be included in subrecipient agreement forms.

Q: My county has a Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) approved by our county commission. Are we required to use elements from the LMS as project priorities for this grant?

A: No, applicants are not required to use elements from the LMS as project priorities for the GPS Program and there are no additional points awarded for LMS approved projects.

Q: Does the use of housing data or data related to housing trigger an AFFH requirement?

A: Any plan that considers housing must conduct an Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) review of the plan to ensure equality. The use of housing data alone would not trigger a review. However, if the final plan presents risks, hazards, or solutions involving housing, an AFFH review would be required.

Q: What is the time frame for this grant?

A: The GPS Program does not have a specific time frame. The GPS grant timeline will follow the Implementation Plan submitted by the applicant. Awardees will have the opportunity to finalize their Implementation Plans during the subrecipient agreement process. All CDBG-MIT funds must be expended within twelve years.

IV. Budget

Q: Can CDBG-MIT funds be used to match FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) for Hurricane Irma-related projects?

A: Yes, CDBG-MIT funds can be used to meet a matching share for other federal programs. This does include FEMA HMGP. The GPS program does not require any local match. However, all use of leveraged or matched funds must be clearly outlined in the GPS application and comply with all HUD and DEO regulations. Additionally, leveraged projects can earn up to 10 points for scoring.

Q: When will CDBG-MIT funds be available to subrecipients?

A: The general process for subrecipients is as follows: At the end of the application process, the mitigation team will immediately begin scoring all applications received. Those applications that appear to qualify for funding will be scheduled for a site visit from DEO. Next, DEO will proceed to award subrecipient agreements to successful applicants. DEO expects notices to award to be issued by the end of 2020 for the GPS Program.

Q: Will I receive the funds immediately after my subrecipient agreement is executed?

No, the funds will be allocated on a cost reimbursement model. The Budget attachment of the application should list project milestones and deliverables. Upon achievement of these deliverables, submission of all required documentation, and approval by the financial department, the subrecipient will be reimbursed for the approved invoice amount.

Q: Are pre-agreement expenses allowed?

A: No, subrecipients may not be reimbursed for expenses prior to a subrecipient agreement being executed between DEO and the subrecipient.

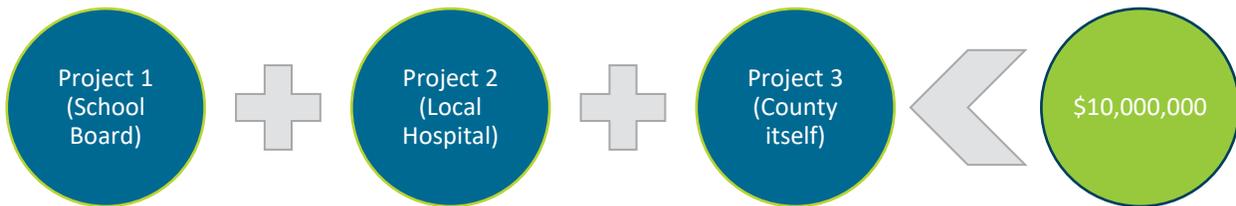
Q: Describe how the maximum amount of funds permitted for applications works?

A: Each eligible entity can apply within the confines of the maximum/minimum thresholds for each of DEO's three CDBG-MIT programs. If an entity meets the maximum application amount for one program, that does not preclude them from applying for another program.

There may be separate entities within the same region that can apply independently for the maximum amounts. For example, both Leon County and the City of Tallahassee can apply for a \$10 million project, because they are two separate UGLG entities. Even though

both entities are located within the same county, they are separate municipalities and therefore both may apply for the maximum amount allowable.

However, if just Leon County is applying for a multitude of projects, they will be limited by the maximum threshold of the given program because they are one entity responsible for multiple projects. For example, Leon County may have three separate projects for the GPS Program. One of the three might be a school board applying in partnership with the County. The second might be a local hospital. The third might be the County itself. The County would be the applicant for three separate projects and combined, the three cannot exceed the maximum threshold of \$10 million.



Q: Can we hire consultants to administer the project?

A: Yes, however all procurements must follow HUD guidelines. More information may be found on the HUD [website](#).

V. Miscellaneous

Q: We have a facility with a service area that encompasses both a State-designated MID and HUD-designated MID. Which area will be considered when scoring the application?

A: If the service area of your facility crosses into both a State and HUD-designated MID area, then DEO will give you the full points for having a service area in a HUD-designated MID area.

Q: What is considered a “regional” project? Will regional projects be given preference?

A: A regional project is a project that contains multiple jurisdictions. For example, several cities within a county or several counties within the state. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recognized in the CDBG-MIT Federal Register Notice that the most effective mitigation strategies are regional in scale. DEO encourages applicants to work with neighbors to identify common hazards and create a regional plan that will benefit more than one community. Regional projects will not receive additional points during the scoring process.

Q: Can you explain “Duplication of Benefits” and supplanting funds in more detail?

A: CDBG-MIT funds are considered funds of last resort. If a project is partially or fully funded, CDBG-MIT funds are prohibited from replacing the funds that have already been dedicated to the project. Applicants are required to disclose all sources of project funding and to notify DEO as soon as new sources of funding are secured. More information may be found [here](#).